

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3738

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 4469

EXDIS

E.O. 1652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, EG

SUBJECT: NUCLEAR POWER REACTOR

REF: CAIRO 4260

1. AT HIS OFFICIAL LUNCHEON YESTERDAY FOR VISITING NORWEGIAN FONMIN, FAHMY -- TOGETHER WITH MIN ELECTRIC POWER SULTAN -- TOOK ME ASIDE TO INQUIRE RE STATUS NUCLEAR POWER AGREEMENT. I TOLD THEM I HAD SUBMITTED A REPORT ON MY TALK WITH MINISTERS SULTAN AND GUBEILI AND THE MEMORANDUM THEY HAD GIVEN ME IMMEDIATELY AFTER OUR MEETING OF LAST TUESDAY. AS YET I HAD NO REPLY, BUT I THOUGH THEY COULD BE SURE THE MATTER IS BEING STUDIED.

2. ON A PURELY PERSONAL BASIS, HOWEVER, I HAD IN ALL CANDOR TO TELL THEM MY CONCERN. WHAT SULTAN/GUBEILI HAD GIVEN ME APPEARED TO BE PRECISELY THE POSITION GOE OFFICIALS HAD TAKEN WHEN THE PERTINENT TECHNICAL TALKS WERE LAST UNDERWAY. THE TWO PRINCIPAL OUTSTANDING ISSUES, NAMELY IN-OR OUR-COUNTRY REPROCESSING AND APPLICABILITY OF SAFEGUARDS, ARE BOTH ESSENTIALLY POLITICAL AND I PERSONALLY WONDERED HOW IN PRESENT UNCERTAIN SITUATION THEY COULD QUICKLY BE RESOLVED. GOE'S POSITIONS ON THESE POINTS IS UNDERSTANDABLE, BUT FAHMY WOULD ALSO UNDERSTAND THE PRACTICAL POLITICAL PROBLEMS THEY POSE.

3. FAHMY RESPONDED REPROCESSING COULD TAKE PLACE, IF USG WISHES, OUTSIDE EGYPT BUT AT USG EXPENSE. AS FOR SAFEGUARDS, GOE PREPARED TO ACCEPT IAEA AND SPECIAL ADDITIONAL US SAFE-
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GUARDS. HOWEVER, IF DIMONA CANNOT BE COVERED AND USG

UNABLE PRESS ISRAEL SIGN NPT, THESE SAFEGUARDS SHOULD BE APPLIED ONLY TO US PROVIDED REACTORS. GOE WILL IN ANY CASE HAVE TO MAKE SEPARATE AGREEMENTS WITH ANY OTHER COUNTRY FROM WHICH A REACTOR IS EVENTUALLY OBTAINED. I TOLD HIM IT WAS MY UNDERSTANDING EGYPTIAN TECHNICAL TEAM HAD EARLIER BEEN TOLD THAT, WHILE REPROCESSING OUTSIDE OF EGYPT NECESSARY, THIS WOULD HAVE TO BE AT EGYPT'S EXPENSE. ON THE APPLICABILITY OF SAFEGUARDS, I DID NOT KNOW OUR REACTION TO GUBEIL'S ALTERNATIVE FORMULATIONS.

4. FAHMY AGAIN STRESSED HIS STRONG HOPE THAT AN AGREEMENT MIGHT BE READY FOR INITIALLY DURING UPCOMING SALZBURG MEETING. HE ASKED THAT THE MATTER BE BROUGHT TO THE SECRETARY'S ATTENTION, SINCE HE FEARED IT WOULD SIMPLY BE LOST IF LEFT TO THE "BUREAUCRACY." I ASSURED HIM EGYPTIAN REQUEST IS BEING BROUGHT TO THE SECRETARY'S ATTENTION, BUT THAT THE LIKELY PROBLEMS I HAD MENTIONED MUST BE FACED BY ALL OF US. I WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH GOE SOON AS REPLY RECEIVED.

5. BOTH FAHMY AND SULTAN REITERATED URGENCY GOE ATTACHES TO MOVING AHEAD ON NUCLEAR POWER PLANT.
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